

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

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SUBJECT Production of Tractors

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1. Tractors are produced at the Zbrojovka Brno plant at Lisen near Brno. This plant was constructed for the production of aircraft engines during the war. In 1944, it was heavily damaged by an air raid, but it was rebuilt after the war.
2. Two types of agricultural tractors are manufactured here:
 - a. The first has a capacity of 15 HP, one cylinder, Diesel engine(1,600 rpm), self-propelled engine, gear box of usual construction; five gears (one back gear); a fixed gauge for wheels (front wheels and back wheels); it does not have the hydraulic mechanism which is now being constructed and tested.
 - b. The second has a capacity of 30 HP, two cylinders, and a diesel engine, constructed by using two cylinders like those in the first type. Otherwise it is identical with the first tractor.
3. Originally, there were many defects in both types of tractors; however, such defects have already been partly eliminated.
4. Until 1948, production was performed in the main plant at Brno. Since that time it has been concentrated in the Lisen plant. The actual production capacity of this plant is 10,000 tractors a year when computed on the basis of 8-hour shifts, six working days a week, and 250 working days a year.
5. The "Z" (Zbrojovka) tractors are relatively weak, and farmers complain about their inefficiency. The plant at Lisen is preparing to increase the number of revolutions of both types of tractors. According to an agreement from 1947-1948 about the types of tractors, the production of these types is to be replaced by that of new ones having greater capacity and efficiency. In principle, one of these is planned to be a two-cylinder tractor and the other a four-cylinder. This construction was sponsored by military circles but was not approved by the technicians at the Armament Factory in Brno. However, the latter were forced to withdraw their objections because of military pressure. It is believed that these new types of tractors are not as yet being produced.
6. In the Skoda plant at Plzen another type of tractor was produced: the Skoda tractor with two cylinders and a diesel engine, but with a gasoline carburetor used for starting and a capacity of approximately 32 HP.

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[redacted] this tractor is much better than the "Z" tractor. Zbrojovka Brno enjoys an exceptional position in the metallurgical industry of Czechoslovakia. Ing. Novotny (fnu), former chief manager of the Zbrojovka Brno and now general manager of the Czechoslovak Plants for Precision Machinery (Ceskoslovenske zavody presneho strojirenstvi), is one of the most powerful personalities in Czech industry. The decision to stop production of the Skoda tractors and to produce only "Z" tractors was made by him. Despite the fact that tractors were always considered to be vehicles, Ing. Novotny did not allow their organized production in the Czechoslovak Automobile and Aircraft Plants (Ceskoslovenske zavody automobilove a letecke) but added it, with the formal approval of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and of the Ministry of Industry, to his general management of the Czechoslovak Plants for Precision Machinery. Because of this fact, necessary contact in the technical field (standardization) became very difficult.

7. No tractors with a greater capacity (approximately 60 HP) have recently been produced in Czechoslovakia, although such tractors are very much needed in forestry and for military purposes. This military need ties in with the 1947-1948 agreement about types of tractors to be produced, but it cannot be met because of the decision to produce only "Z" tractors.
8. The CKD factory in Prague-Marlin has manufactured until the present time an old type of four-cylinder tractor with a greater capacity and is preparing, in accordance with the wishes of the military, a new type of caterpillar tractor with an approximate capacity of at least 60 HP. This production is under the General Directorate of Heavy Industry, (Ceskoslovenske Zavody Tezkeho Strojnictvi).
9. The situation regarding future developments in the construction of tractors is uncertain, especially because of a lack of sound military technical leadership. Many of the old military specialists from the Military Technical Institute [redacted] have been arrested or discharged.

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10. [It is reported that two officer engineers from the Military Technical Institute have been designated as responsible officers in the field of development of all military vehicles.] They are to be supported by all construction bureaus in national enterprises producing motor vehicles. The work that reportedly is to be started is based on the standardization of motor vehicles, whereas military vehicles are to receive special consideration. These officers are also entrusted with the task of constructing a new tractor for military purposes. In the meantime, only the following tractors are at their disposal:

Model "Z", 35 HP, wheels
 Model "Z", 30 HP, wheels
 Praga (CKD), about 60 HP, caterpillar

11. In view of the fact that preparations for the new type of tractor have not yet been completed, it is believed that production of these tractors for military purposes cannot take place until 1953.

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